

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U.S. Appln. No. 09/895,264 (Q64664)

conveying a support, on which a photosensitive coating solution containing an organic solvent is coated such that a photosensitive coated layer is formed by the photosensitive coating solution;

drying the photosensitive coated layer by a first heating means to a dry-to-touch state;

heating the support and the photosensitive coated layer by a second heating means, which does not contact the support and the photosensitive coated layer, and which is provided at a downstream side of the first heating means, so that hardening of the photosensitive coated layer is promoted; and

changing a condition of heating of the second heating means while the support is being conveyed.

12. (Twice Amended) A method for manufacturing a lithographic printing plate, the method comprising:

supplying a plurality of supports that have different thicknesses or widths, the supports being coated with a photosensitive coating solution containing an organic solvent such that photosensitive coated layers are respectively formed by the photosensitive coating solution;

drying the photosensitive coated layers by a first heating means to a dry-to-touch state;

heating the supports and the photosensitive coated layers by a second heating means provided at a downstream side of the first heating means so that hardening of the photosensitive coated layers is promoted;

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changing a condition of heating the supports and the photosensitive coated layers by the second heating means in accordance with thicknesses or widths of the supports.

13. (Amended) A method for manufacturing a lithographic printing plate according to claim 12, wherein the second heating means is a plurality of drying devices which are disposed along a conveying path of the supports, and amounts of heat supplied by the plurality of heating devices are respectively controlled in accordance with changes in dimensions of the supports.

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18. (Amended) A method for manufacturing a lithographic printing plate according to claim 12, wherein the first heating means heats the photosensitive coated layers to 90°C or more.

19. (Amended) A method for manufacturing a lithographic printing plate according to claim 12, wherein the first heating means dries the photosensitive coated layers such that a remaining amount of the organic solvent in the photosensitive coated layers is 5 wt% or less of the photosensitive coated layers.

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22. (Amended) A method for manufacturing a lithographic printing plate according to claim 12, wherein the condition of heating by the second heating means is controlled in accordance with a type of the photosensitive coated layers formed on the supports,

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such that a temperature of the photosensitive coated layers immediately after heating by the second heating means is a predetermined temperature which is set in accordance with the type of the photosensitive coated layers.

24. (Amended) A method for manufacturing a lithographic printing plate
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according to claim 12, wherein after hot air drying of the photosensitive coated layers by the first heating means, the second heating means radiates mid-infrared radiation or far infrared radiation to the photosensitive coated layers and the supports so as to heat the supports and the photosensitive coated layers.

25. (Amended) A method for manufacturing a lithographic printing plate
according to claim 12, further comprising, at a down stream side of the cooling step, a step of forming overcoat layers on the photosensitive coated layers.
